
SENATE BILL 5683

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senators Wellman, Hasegawa, Keiser, Wilson, C., Darneille, Hunt, Salomon, Das, Conway, Kuderer, Nguyen, and Saldaña; by request of Office of the Governor

Read first time 01/28/19. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the welcome to Washington baby
2 act to create family supports through universal home visiting
3 programs and a statewide family linkage program for resources and
4 referrals; amending RCW 43.216.130 and 43.216.157; adding new
5 sections to chapter 43.216 RCW; creating new sections; recodifying
6 RCW 43.216.130, 43.216.152, 43.216.155, 43.216.157, and 43.216.159;
7 providing an expiration date; and declaring an emergency.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** This act may be known and cited as the
10 welcome to Washington baby act of 2019.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The legislature finds that supporting
12 families with newborn infants is essential to the health and well-
13 being of the family and that home visiting is an evidence-based
14 approach to supporting families that yields positive outcomes. The
15 federal and Washington state governments have supported a limited
16 number of families in Washington with modest investments in home
17 visiting over the years. In 2010, the federal government established
18 the maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting program,
19 which currently provides three hundred sixty-three million dollars to
20 home visiting services nationwide. Also in 2010, the Washington state

1 legislature created the home visiting services account, which is the
2 state's portfolio account for home visiting services that includes
3 state, federal, and private dollars. While these investments have
4 allowed the state to serve more children and families, a recent home
5 visiting needs assessment revealed that thousands of families in
6 Washington would benefit from home visiting, but currently do not
7 have access.

8 (2) Research shows that a properly designed home visiting program
9 improves the parenting skills of parents with newborns through
10 education about effective parenting and care, child development,
11 health, safety, and nutrition. Home visiting also produces long-term
12 benefits such as a reduction in infant emergency room visits, child
13 abuse and neglect referrals, and maternal and infant mental health
14 services referrals. The connection to services is often of equal
15 value to the personal connection for a new parent to a person they
16 know and trust so they do not feel alone and have a sounding board
17 and someone to ask for help, when needed. The legislature further
18 finds that cultural responsiveness in service delivery and community
19 representation lead to more meaningful engagement with service
20 providers and to greater community well-being overall.

21 (3) The legislature finds that in-home visitation can prove
22 beneficial for each family, their infant, the postpartum mother, and
23 for the community as a whole. While the primary goal of this act is
24 to improve the lives of families and their newborns, the outcomes of
25 these programs may result in a cost savings to the state of
26 Washington and its taxpayers.

27 (4) The federal and Washington state governments have supported a
28 limited number of families in Washington with modest investments in
29 home visiting over the years. In 2010, the federal government
30 established the maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting
31 program, which currently provides three hundred sixty-three million
32 dollars to home visiting services nationwide. Also in 2010, the
33 Washington state legislature created the home visiting services
34 account, which is the state's portfolio account for home visiting
35 services that includes state, federal, and private dollars. While
36 these investments have allowed the state to serve more children and
37 families, a recent home visiting needs assessment revealed that
38 thousands of families in Washington would benefit from home visiting,
39 but currently do not have access.

1 (5) Therefore, the legislature intends to create a universal home
2 visiting program for all newborns and a statewide family linkage
3 program that provides resources and referrals. The legislature
4 further intends to welcome each family of a newborn with basic
5 health, wellness, and stability services as well as information on
6 important community resources to help build local community-based
7 connections for new parents.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216
9 RCW to read as follows:

10 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
11 specific purpose, the department shall implement a universal home
12 visiting program for newborns and their families residing in
13 Washington state. The universal home visiting program must be
14 available to all newborns, from birth to nine months old, and their
15 families. Each family of any newborn must receive information about
16 participation in the universal home visiting program. The program
17 must be voluntary and any family must be able to disenroll from the
18 program at any time.

19 (2) The department shall implement the universal home visiting
20 program in a phased-in approach starting with at least two
21 communities with the highest need, as determined by community risk
22 factors such as rates of child welfare referrals, low birth weight
23 rates, and percentage of low-income residents. The first communities
24 selected must demonstrate interest in and capacity to host the
25 program. In addition, the first communities selected must be clear on
26 how they will ensure that the diversity of the community is reflected
27 in its home visitors and ensure that the program is designed with the
28 diversity in mind. By July 1, 2027, the universal home visiting
29 program must be a statewide entitlement. The entitlement includes up
30 to three home visits. Any additional referred services as described
31 in subsection (3)(c) of this section are not part of the universal
32 home visiting entitlement.

33 (3) The universal home visiting program must be administered as
34 follows:

35 (a) An evidence-based or promising practice early childhood home
36 visiting service delivery model must be adopted to provide the
37 universal home visiting program, and the department shall comply with
38 model fidelity. Enhancements or adaptations of the model must be made
39 and evaluated with agreement of the model developer.

1 (b) The department shall attempt to meet the language needs of
2 all families enrolled in the program. In implementing this act, the
3 department shall also take steps to ensure culturally responsive
4 service delivery.

5 (c) The home visitor must be a registered nurse licensed to
6 practice registered nursing under chapter 18.79 RCW or an allied
7 professional approved by the model.

8 (d) The department shall offer up to three home visits under the
9 universal home visiting program. The first home visit must be for
10 building trust and a strengths-based connection with the family, as
11 well as assessing the health, safety, and immediate needs of the
12 child and family. The first home visit must occur within the first
13 thirty days after birth. If a family disenrolls in the program before
14 the first visit but reenrolls at a later date, the first visit must
15 occur within thirty days of reenrollment in the program. The first
16 visit must also include resources to connect the family with various
17 services if needed including, but not limited to, public benefits and
18 services, transportation resources, and online tools and resources.
19 The department may partner with private businesses to offer free
20 resources in addition to public services and information. At the time
21 of the first visit, the home visitor must provide the family with a
22 document designed by the department to assist the family in tracking
23 the progress, health, and education benchmarks for the newborn. The
24 second and third home visits may be scheduled depending on the needs
25 of the child and family. If additional services or needs are
26 identified, the home visitor may refer, contingent upon the family's
27 consent, the family or child for participation in long-term intensive
28 home visiting services. Additional referrals for health care
29 services, mental health services, public assistance programs, or
30 other appropriate services may also be provided by the home visitor
31 through local resources and the statewide family linkage program
32 created in section 8 of this act.

33 (4) The department shall ensure that at least ten percent of the
34 home visits, if needed, are provided outside of traditional work
35 hours. For the purposes of this section, "traditional work hours"
36 means Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

37 (5) Between thirty days and forty-five days after the last home
38 visit by the home visitor and prior to the case closure, the
39 department shall ensure that the family is contacted to confirm
40 whether the family received recommended services, and whether the

1 family contacted, or was contacted by, the service provider offered
2 to families through local community resources or the statewide family
3 linkage program created in section 8 of this act. During this precase
4 closure contact, the department shall also confirm whether the family
5 has any additional needs not previously identified.

6 (6) The department shall work in collaboration with the
7 department of health, the department of social and health services,
8 and the health care authority to ensure effective service delivery.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216
10 RCW to read as follows:

11 (1) After the first two communities have implemented universal
12 home visiting to scale as described in section 3 of this act, the
13 department shall conduct an independent evaluation to measure family
14 and child outcomes for at least those two communities with a focus on
15 child health, maternal health, referrals to child welfare,
16 availability of health care, dependency hearings, access to healthy
17 food, return on investment, and family satisfaction with the program.
18 The department shall also examine the overall community health and
19 the associated outcomes regarding community health as a result of the
20 program. The department must submit this report, in compliance with
21 RCW 43.01.036, to the appropriate committees of the legislature and
22 the governor by November 1, 2026.

23 (2) This section expires December 1, 2026.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 (1) The department shall develop an implementation plan for the
27 universal home visiting program created in section 3 of this act,
28 which must include, but not be limited to, the following:

29 (a) A description of the evidence-based early childhood home
30 visiting services delivery model selected by the department, in
31 conjunction with the first communities selected to host the program,
32 why it was selected, and a description of other models that were
33 considered;

34 (b) A description of the department's regional phased-in
35 approach, with priority given to communities demonstrating the
36 highest need, and a timeline for implementation, which must be done
37 in consultation with local health jurisdictions, cities, counties,

1 community-based organizations, and early learning regional
2 coalitions;

3 (c) A recruitment and outreach strategy for families and
4 communities;

5 (d) A workforce plan for training, recruitment, hiring, and
6 retention of diverse, multilingual, and culturally responsive home
7 visitors throughout the state; and

8 (e) A plan to promote the universal home visiting program to gain
9 the broadest use and understanding of the opportunities provided by
10 the program and to increase community participation.

11 (2) The department must submit the implementation plan, in
12 compliance with RCW 43.01.036, to the appropriate committees of the
13 legislature and the governor by October 1, 2020. The department, or
14 its contracted home visitors, may begin service delivery for the
15 universal home visiting program prior to submission of the
16 implementation plan.

17 **Sec. 6.** RCW 43.216.130 and 2017 c 171 s 2 are each amended to
18 read as follows:

19 (1)(a) The home visiting services account is created in the state
20 treasury. Revenues to the account shall consist of appropriations by
21 the legislature and all other sources deposited in the account. All
22 federal funds received by the department for home visiting activities
23 must be deposited into the account.

24 (b)(i) Expenditures from the account shall be used for state
25 matching funds for the purposes of the program established in this
26 section and federally funded activities for the home visiting
27 program, including administrative expenses.

28 (ii) The department oversees the account and is the lead state
29 agency for home visiting system development. The nongovernmental
30 private-public partnership supports the home visiting service
31 delivery system and provides support functions to funded programs.

32 (iii) It is the intent of the legislature that state funds
33 invested in the account be matched by the private-public partnership
34 each fiscal year.

35 (iv) Amounts used for program administration by the department
36 may not exceed an average of ten percent in any two consecutive
37 fiscal years.

38 (v) Authorizations for expenditures may be given only after
39 private funds are committed. The nongovernmental private-public

1 partnership must report to the department quarterly to demonstrate
2 investment of private match funds.

3 (c) Expenditures from the account are subject to appropriation
4 and the allotment provisions of chapter 43.88 RCW.

5 (2) The department must expend moneys from the account to provide
6 state matching funds for partnership activities to implement home
7 visiting services and administer the infrastructure necessary to
8 develop, support, and evaluate evidence-based, research-based, and
9 promising home visiting programs.

10 (3) Activities eligible for funding through the account include,
11 but are not limited to:

12 (a) Home visiting services that achieve one or more of the
13 following: (i) Enhancing child development and well-being by
14 alleviating the effects on child development of poverty and other
15 known risk factors; (ii) reducing the incidence of child abuse and
16 neglect; or (iii) promoting school readiness for young children and
17 their families; (~~and~~)

18 (b) Development and maintenance of the infrastructure for home
19 visiting programs, including training, quality improvement, and
20 evaluation; and

21 (c) The universal home visiting program created in section 3 of
22 this act, which may be funded with a budget proviso. The private-
23 public partnership match described in subsection (1)(b)(iii) of this
24 section does not apply to the universal home visiting program.

25 (4) (~~Beginning July 1, 2010,~~) The department shall contract
26 with the nongovernmental private-public partnership designated in RCW
27 (~~43.215.070~~) 43.216.065 to support programs funded through the home
28 visiting services account. The department shall monitor performance
29 and provide periodic reports on the uses and outcomes of the home
30 visiting services account.

31 (5) The department shall, in the administration of the programs:

32 (a) Fund programs through a competitive bid process or in
33 compliance with the regulations of the funding source; and

34 (b) Convene an advisory committee of diverse early learning and
35 home visiting experts, including (~~one~~) representatives from the
36 department, to advise the partnership regarding research and the
37 distribution of funds from the account to eligible programs.

38 **Sec. 7.** RCW 43.216.157 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 32 s 6 are each
39 amended to read as follows:

1 The definitions in this section apply throughout this section and
2 RCW ((43.215.145, 43.215.147, and 43.121.185)) 43.216.130,
3 43.216.152, 43.216.155, 43.216.159 (as recodified by this act), and
4 sections 3, 5, 8, and 9 of this act unless the context clearly
5 requires otherwise.

6 (1) "Evidence-based" means a program or practice that has had
7 multiple site random controlled trials across heterogeneous
8 populations demonstrating that the program or practice is effective
9 for the population.

10 (2) "Home visitation" means providing services in the permanent
11 or temporary residence, or in other familiar surroundings, of the
12 family receiving such services.

13 (3) "Research-based" means a program or practice that has some
14 research demonstrating effectiveness, but that does not yet meet the
15 standard of evidence-based practices.

16 (4) "Statewide family linkage program" means the resource and
17 referral system created by the department in section 8 of this act.

18 (5) "Universal home visiting" means the home visitation services
19 provided to all newborns and their families, regardless of income,
20 educational, or employment status, as described in section 3 of this
21 act.

22 NEW SECTION. Sec. 8. A new section is added to chapter 43.216
23 RCW to read as follows:

24 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
25 specific purpose, the department shall develop a statewide family
26 linkage program that provides resources and referrals to all families
27 residing in Washington. The department must coordinate with linkage
28 resources already active in communities including, but not limited
29 to, family service centers, community information centers, and
30 municipal and county governments.

31 (2) In developing the statewide family linkage program, the
32 department shall create an implementation plan to be delivered, in
33 compliance with RCW 43.01.036, to the appropriate committees of the
34 legislature and the governor by October 1, 2020.

35 (3) The statewide family linkage program must be operational
36 statewide by July 1, 2027.

37 NEW SECTION. Sec. 9. A new section is added to chapter 43.216
38 RCW to read as follows:

1 The department may adopt rules under chapter 34.05 RCW for the
2 administration of the universal home visiting program created in
3 section 3 of this act and the statewide family linkage program
4 created in section 8 of this act.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** RCW 43.216.130, 43.216.152, 43.216.155,
6 43.216.157, and 43.216.159 are each recodified as sections in chapter
7 43.216 RCW.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** This act is necessary for the immediate
9 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
10 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
11 effect immediately.

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